day presents, people will rather be inclined to buy luxury articles than books. He exemplified this idea on children's books which had been sold, in his opinion, to such a great extent because toys and other amusements for children were not available during the war.

To sum up, it appeared from Mr Harrap's outline that the publishing trade had played a very important part during the war in keeping up, as best it could, the demand for books, and keeping also the cultural and educational value of book publishing in view, which was not only valuable for the raising of the morale of the people, but also of assitance to the propaganda of British culture abroad.

G. E. EICHBAUM.

ARCHIVES AND LOCAL HISTORY IN NEW ZEALAND

ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT CONFERENCE

I ARCHIVES IN NEW ZEALAND

By G. H. Scholefield

ARCHIVES may be defined as the papers or records created in state departments, which, having become obsolete as far as current use is concerned, are transferred for safe keeping or disposal to a special department or division charged with that duty. I wouldn't be too rigid in defining the scope of archives. It depends on the conditions obtaining. In Canada the Archives are a cross between an archive proper and a special library (like the Turnbull). In New South Wales the Mitchell Library was formerly actually the archive for New South Wales and even, until quite recently, for Australia.

A start was made on the New Zealand Archives in 1926. No act was passed establishing a department, but the Government yielded to my own importunities, which began sys-

tematically several years earlier and were reinforced in 1924 by the Board of Science and Art. I was appointed the first New Zealand Archivist. No staff was provided, but the Department of Internal Affairs, under which I then was, made a typist available occasionally, and for a year or two a retired private secretary (H. J. Macalister) was employed as indexer. The only quarters available were on the top floor of the General Assembly Library. In the first economy purge of the depression the Archives felt the brunt and the small sum allowed as honorarium was reduced almost to nothing. Shortly afterwards the work was transferred to the more august but less personal care of the Cabinet itself. All of the field work and processing was done by myself; sorting, weeding, preparing for binding and so on. You will understand, therefore, why it has not been possible to publish more than one Archives Bulletin, and why the essential work of calendaring and indexing has made little progress; why some of the material in possession of the Archives has not been fully listed.

In 1926 New Zealand had been in existence as a Colony and Dominion for nearly 90 years. Throughout that time immense quantities of paper had been created in Government administrations, not only at the seat of Government, but also in hundreds of local offices under various decentralised departments (e.g. customs, defence, post and telegraph, public works, marine, lands and survey).

Current records have generally been well looked after: that stands to reason; but New Zealand has suffered, probably neither more nor less than other countries, from the natural enemies of historical records—fire, rats, water, shipwreck, unauthorised dispersal and, too often, desperate and deliberate destruction to make room for current files. The Government Buildings in Auckland were burnt down in the forties. The Printing Office was burnt once. Parliament House was destroyed in 1906 and the White Swan sank off the East Coast in 1862. Some of these losses were serious. The White Swan, though it is invoked even to-day to explain missing documents of date prior to 1862, did not involve any great loss.

To-day there are enthusiasts in almost every department who have done yeoman service in protecting their records for posterity. In earlier years it was not always so. The demolition of decaying offices all over the country led to haphazard scattering of the records, many of which were destroyed or got into private hands. The Treaty of Waitangi

suffered grievously from rats while lying in cellars under Government offices, and to a less degree from the acquisitiveness of a prominent political collector, who cut a wide slice as a souvenir from the foot of the first skin.

On my first making contact with departments I found some officials keen on historical documents and most of the records remarkably well kept. Fortunately this was so in the Department of Internal Affairs. Under its earlier title of the Colonial Secretary's Office it was the mother of the service, and it is still a key department. Now and again officials, less scientifically minded, were simply interested in individual documents as museum pieces. That enthusiasm, benevolent enough in itself, has been responsible for a certain dispersion of archive material.

Though as Archivist I had no statutory authority, I found Departmental officers uniformly friendly to this new inquisition and anxious to help. After discussion with record officers of the best way to preserve their papers for the future a schedule of disposal was agreed to between the Archivist and the head of each department. These schedules, which have just been revised, cover a vast mass of unimportant routine papers—documents, chits, dockets, authorities to pay, receipts and so on—constituting perhaps one half or more of the paper created in the ordinary course of administration. By virtue of this arrangement record officers can safely destroy records falling within these categories without reference to me. They are held only for such periods as the departments themselves, or the audit department, consider they should be kept.

Field work: My chief task from the outset was to search out derelict records in the larger cities and in small (and often decayed) towns all over the Dominion and if they were not in good hands to bring them to Wellington for better custody.

In the first few years after my appointment I ransacked hundered of offices, outhouses and cellars in every corner of New Zealand. Many of them had been untenanted for years and it was only a matter of time when they would be burnt down. In that campaign I became more fully acquainted with dust, mildew, silver fish, spiders and damp. Most of New Zealand is outside the latitude of the worst paper pests, but mason bees and cockroaches have lived well off North Auckland records, and the archives of the old British Consulate at Samoa, dating back to the forties, had to be fumigated several times to make sure that no pests

survived. There is still much field work of this nature to be done. Deposits of derelict records are liable to turn up wherever there has been a mining camp, a police station, a post office or customhouse. In particular, places like Coromandel, Russell, Akaroa, Hokitika and Collingwood will always yield results to the patient investigator.

While on this salvage work in New Zealand repositories I was able to collect a vast quantity of old official publications—Hansards, Gazettes, parliamentary and provincial papers—from which libraries in every part of the Dominion were assisted to fill up their collections.

You will appreciate that my preoccupation was necessarily the conservation of old records and the protection of later ones from destruction. The technical processes of an archive obviously could not be undertaken without adequate staff and accomodation. Many of the records in our possession could not even be listed. Some urgent copying was carried out and some calendaring and indexing was done by Mr Macalister, especially of the Governors' despatches, the New Zealand Company's papers and immigration lists, which I was anxious to have accessible in view of the Centennial. They were available and were very extensively used in the spate of research which we experienced during that period.

N.Z. Company. This deposit, to which we have assigned the notation *N.Z.C.*, is the outcome of a very interesting episode in archive history. About 1901 Dr Hocken spent some months in the cellars of the Public Record Office in London, examining the records of the New Zealand Company, which were transferred to the British Government when the Company was dissolved in 1858. He passed judgment on each book, file and package of these papers and died in the belief that New Zealand was to receive this priceless memorial of its early history. A few years later our Government did receive a ton or more of the Company's papers. They were not carefully examined but a few pieces were abstracted from time to time, by James Cowan, Dr Allan Thomson, and others, for the Turnbull Library and I think the Hocken. When I began systematically to sort this tangled mass of material and to compare it with Dr Hocken's report, I discovered that we had been given only what he considered worthless. It is, however, not without historical value and we are lucky to have it at all, especially such series as the shipping lists, draft minutes and correspondence, and land records. Many of the more important

papers have been bound. We hope before long to receive microfilm copies of the whole of the Company's records, which are being preserved jealously by the Public Record Office. They aggregate over 300 columns, a list of which we possess.

In my time we have received back in the archives many documents which had strayed into private hands. As the Godolphin papers in Great Britain eventually returned to their rightful custody in the Public Record Office so we have been presented with our own. We have been offered some of our own possessions for sale, besides, of course, many frauds and bogus documents. Amongst these were the so-called 'Hobson proclamations,' which were merely lithographed copies printed in 1890 and absurdly described as genuine originals.

Owing to lack of accomodation and staff it has not been possible to accept the transfer of archive material from departments on an adequate scale or to process and service what we did take over. The war affected us in two ways. In the first instance it compelled us to send the bulk of our archive material to a safe repository inland. It has since been returned to Wellington, but it is not yet fully shelved. The second outcome of the war is of a more happy nature, the creation of the War Archives. This involved the appointment of an adequate staff from the fighting services, with ample material and accommodation. Under Mr E. H. McCormick excellent work has been done, and I am hopeful that from this impetus we shall soon see the National Archives placed on a better basis under an archives act passed by Parliament.

The war has also hastened the use of microfilm. This must have a revolutionary effect on archives generally, and particularly those of this Dominion. The earliest history of New Zealand is contained in a mass of official documents, of which the originals are in the P.R.O. in London, the archives of Australia and in some foreign countries. These, we hope, will all be microfilmed for our purpose. The Australian National Library and the Mitchell Library are about to engage in a great microfilming programme in London covering the whole field of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific. I hope that our Archives and the Turnbull Library will be able to collaborate in this work and so make good the numerous lacunae in our historical sources.

In New Zealand microfilm will be used to copy not only a vast mass of departmental files of secondary value but also

scattered records which are in danger of being lost. Many army records of previous wars could be treated in this way to free space for current files or merely to guard against the risk of destruction pending their archive treatment. Records of the Native Land Courts, which are strictly archives but should also be regarded as Maori literature, are lying in our courthouses all over the country. They also should be microfilmed as a safeguard. Then there are long series of Governors' despatches inward and outward which should be filmed, preferably in England. The efficient service of microfilm involves a highly developed system of indexing, and thus indexing will now become a very special skill in archives and library work.

The bearing of microfilm on non-archive material and local historical collections is a topic of wide interest to all but the smallest libraries.

LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

These collections border upon archives and are of interest to practically every librarian in the country. There is no library so small that it cannot accommodate a tiny local collection. Yet I admit that the smaller the library, below a certain standard, the more difficult it is to encourage people to present items of historical interest and for the librarian to give proper attention to anything of this description that he does receive.

The first and most obvious item in a local collection is pamphlets and small books actually written about the district and its institutions. Almost every little town, in celebrating the anniversary of its school or church, has marked the occasion by the publication of a pamphlet. These should of course be preserved in the local library.

Newspapers. Much more important, though, are the files of the local newspaper, if the township has ever had one. Many country papers have ceased publication and the files have been lost or have found their way into the national collection in the General Assembly Library or some of the larger city libraries. Where there are papers still publishing or files of extinct papers still exist the librarian should try to influence the borough or county council, whether it is the library authority or not, to bind them and keep them in a safe place. Many have already done this as a result of my own representations to the Newspaper Proprietors' Association and the Municipal Association. You will see from the *Union Catalogue of New Zealand Newspapers* just

what the position was in 1938 and where appropriate newspapers are to be found. The librarian should see that readers who are really interested are permitted to make use of them as far as possible. The city librarians are generally able to care for their own newspaper collections and some of them even index their local papers.

All local papers should, of course, be indexed. This I know is a counsel of perfection. In the smaller towns such work is entirely dependent upon the enthusiasm of the librarian or some amateur helper equally interested in history. Local indexes cannot be too full. Every item of news should be taken care of and also the advertisements, which often contain information not obtainable elsewhere. In every index entry give the date of the paper as shortly as possible (e.g. 12.11.1879) and, if you like, the page and column, but on no account take any notice of the volume and serial numbers. This stupid archaism appears on many New Zealand newspapers just as if it mattered.

Vital Records. Until 1885 there was no compulsory registration in New Zealand, of births, deaths and marriages. Prior to that date, therefore, registers of this sort kept by the various churches have considerable value. Even of later date they are not to be ignored. The librarian should take an interest in these, see that they are in safe keeping and encourage the custodians to facilitate filming if this is ever mooted.

Family Bibles and the registers of cemeteries are also worth caring for, but small libraries are not likely to be able to take charge of them. One thing, however, is simple. Get a copy of every electoral roll published in your district —that is, about one every three years. Have it bound and kept in a safe place. Try not to lend these to political party organisations or they may not come back. We have in the General Assembly Library electoral rolls for the whole of New Zealand back to the sixties, and find they are very often consulted for genealogical and historical and social security purposes. The rolls of the local school should also be kept in view. Don't let them be destroyed just because they may disclose the age of the mayor or his wife.

Local Body Records. The minutes and account books of local bodies, societies, clubs, friendly society lodges and so forth should be given attention. Local bodies as a rule take good care of their minute books, but cases may occur in which obsolete books are in danger of destruction. If so

the librarian should intervene. If he has no means of caring for such things himself he can always transfer them to the national archives.

Social organisations going out of existence should always be asked to hand over their minutes for safe keeping.

Old Settlers' Reminiscences. There are not many old settlers or pioneers left now who can remember anything clearly even as remote as the late sixties. Still, the older inhabitants of any place should be encouraged, if they show any signs of that sort of intelligence, to put their recollections into writing. I warn you that the bulk of such memories are not very accurate, but if you have not time to look after this yourself you may find some local enthusiast who is sufficiently versed in local history to do the questioning and keep the ancients on the track. There are sure to be some men and women in your town who have something worth recording for the benefit or amusement of their fellows.

Old letters. Sometimes people who are cleaning up their home or moving to a new one will let drop that they have come across a lot of old letters which they propose to burn. Suggest to them that they may be of interest to your library. They are certain to demur that the letters are mainly personal, that there is nothing of historical value in them and that there are things the family would not like to have known. You can honestly assure them that the warmth has long since departed from the fiercest family quarrel: In any case you would propose to read the letters through and have typed only the portions which seemed to have some interest quite independent of local quarrels and libels. In dealing with old letters I want to warn you to be very careful to get rid of the envelopes at the earliest possible moment. They are of no use to the collection, and the stamps on them are a temptation to the first person who looks over them. But be sure before separating a letter from its cover that the letter itself is properly dated. If it is not you should pencil at the top of the letter the date and place which appear on the postmark. Then send the envelopes back to their owners as quickly as possible.

The best way to treat personal letters is to arrange them chronologically, read them carefully through and mark with pencil the portions that are to be left out. Then have them neatly typed on quarto sheets with a fair margin and bound into volumes. Librarians in small places may not be able to do things in this way, but they need not. They have

only to bring the material to the notice of one of the larger libraries, or of one of the national libraries in Wellington, and I think that if the letters are of any value they will have no difficulty in persuading the large libraries to edit and type them and give the originating library a copy of the result. Here again the librarian should get the material indexed as soon and as efficiently as possible. A local enthusiast will probably do that quite well for local needs, especially as he may have more specialised knowledge of the subject matter.

Portraits: Every locality can build up a good portrait collection without much trouble. A public appeal will undoubtedly yield more than you are likely to be able to handle. If you don't show a little restraint in accepting pictures you may disappoint the donors later on. Remember that every family album in the country has at least half a dozen obscure pictures of people who later became significant. If possible take only small pictures, say quarter or half plate. Always write the full name and the date of birth and death on the back pending your final treatment of the collection. (New Plymouth Hist. Coll., Otago Early Settlers Museum). Larger libraries will, of course, index also the portraits in the books in their own collection.

Museums. In the provincial capitals and some of the larger towns the library will often find itself either close to a museum or actually with a museum collection attached. It is a complication to have to manage a museum, but sometimes a wave of local enthusiasm leaves the librarian no option. If he is astute he can use it to improve his library grant.

Another feature of the large provincial library should be the official publications of the old province in which it is situated. The provincial period (1853-76) is now three-quarters of a century behind us, and these early records—Proceedings, Gazettes and Ordinances—should be built up and jealously cared for.